

THE

Most Rev. Dr. EDWARD SYNGE,
(late Lord Archbishop of Tuam's)

A N S W E R

TO TWO

OBJECTIONS

Made against his

Charitable A D D R E S S .

To all who are of the

C O M M U N I O N

O F T H E

Church of ROME,

A New EDITION Corrected.

L O N D O N :

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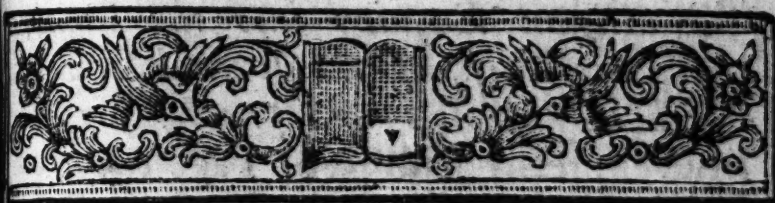
IN the Beginning of April last, I received a very civil Letter from a Person with whom I am not acquainted, in which he desires my Answer to Two Objections, which he tells me had been made by a learned Adversary, to my Charitable Address. It was about a Month before I could get Time, from other Business of Importance, to set about the Performance of this easy Task. And hoping that what I have writ may give Satisfaction to others, in some very necessary Points, as well as to the Gentleman who makes this Request to me, I thought it would not be amiss to publish it to the World.

When I had almost finished this Paper, I received another such
A 2 *Letter*

Letter in Print, designed indeed to pass for an Answer to my whole Address; tho' omitting to take the least notice of some of the most material Things contained in it: But having much Business to settle in my Diocese, from which I have long been forced to be absent, it will be some Time before I can begin to take this Performance into full Consideration. As soon as I have Leisure, I intend (God willing) to do it.

EDW. TUAM.

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THE
Archbishop of Tuam's
ANSWER, &c.

SIR, *Dublin, May 28. 1728.*



THAT the Answer which I shall give to the Objections contain'd in your Letter may be the clearer, give me Leave to put you in mind of a few Things.

When I publish'd my *Charitable Address to all who are of the Communion of the Church of Rome*; it was not my Design therein to *confute* their Errors (which has already been often

done by more able Pens than mine) but only to *put them upon a serious and diligent Enquiry into the Truth and Lawfulness of the several Things which they profess and practise*; as I have expressly said § 36. Page 64.

In order to this, after a short Representation of the Sin and Danger into which a Man runs by refusing or neglecting to enquire into the Ground and Reason of his Religion, and the several Parts and Branches of it; I thought it most proper to lay before them the Sum and Substance of that Religion, by the sincere Profession and Practice of which a Man is duly qualified, even according to the *Romish* Principles, to be a sound and faithful Member of Christ's Church, and consequently, if he therein persists, to attain to everlasting Salvation. Which I thought could not better be done, than by giving a full Account of every thing which the Church of *Rome* requires to be professed and practised by every one whom she admits into her Communion by the Holy Sacrament of Baptism. And this I have accordingly

dingly faithfully done by translating so much of the Office of Baptism contained in the *Roman Ritual* as was necessary for that purpose.

And since not one of those Articles, which Pope *Pius*, upon the Authority of the Council of *Trent*, has added to the Christian Faith, is required even by the Church of *Rome* to be believed or made Profession of in order to *Baptism*; I desired them well to consider by what Authority the Belief or Profession of these additional Articles is or ought to be required from any one in order to his *eternal Salvation*, or as necessary thereunto; as that Pope, in the Conclusion of his *Profession of Faith*, sets them forth to be. To which Difficulty the only Answer that ever I have heard to be given, being that all these additional Articles are sufficiently contained in that one Article of the *Apostles Creed* wherein we profess our Belief of *the Holy Catholick Church* (by whose Authority it is pretended that all these additional Articles are defined and established) I thought the most likely way
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to set them right in this Matter would be to lay before them the Explication of this important Article, *I believe the Holy Catholick Church*, as it is most plainly contained in the *Roman Catechism* published by Authority: Which Explication I have accordingly given § 11, &c. and desire you again to read and consider.

The learned Adversary, whom you mention, allows that I have fairly represented the Sense of the *Roman Catechism* in this Point; and yet he objects to the Doctrine which he allows I have taken out of it. But he ought to consider that this Doctrine which I have thus laid down, touching the *Holy Catholick Church*, is indeed the Doctrine of the *Roman Catechism*: And therefore it is incumbent upon himself either to answer his own Objection; or else to reject that Authority by which this *Catechism* is established. I desire him to do which of the two he thinks best.

But it is reasonable that, for your Satisfaction, I should consider his Objection. Thus then, you tell me, he argues,

argues, viz. *That though we are not obliged to believe in the Church as we believe in God, yet the Creed obliges us to believe that there is a Holy Catholick Church ; and, the Scripture commanding us to hear that Church upon Pain of an Anathema, that we owe as implicit a Faith to her Decrees, as if the Creed had enjoined us to believe in the Church.*

Here then I desire you to observe that he expressly says, (as the *Roman Catechism* also does) *that we are not to believe in the Church as we believe in God.* Now the very utmost Belief that we have or can have in God, is, that when once we are assured that such or such a particular Doctrine is deliver'd by God ; although the Doctrine and the Grounds and Reasons of it are beyond our Commprehension, yet we are bound to believe it to be true, for this Reason alone, because God, whose Knowledge is infinite, and Veracity undoubted, has been pleased to give it out and deliver it to us ; which is usually call'd an *implicit Faith* : If then, (as he asserts) *we owe as im-*
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plicit a Faith to the Decrees of the Church, as if the Creed had enjoined us to believe in the Church; are we not hereby in Reality obliged to believe in the Church in the very same manner as we believe in God? Which is directly contrary to what the Roman Catechism expressly maintains, and is fully granted in the Objection. Or else let him tell us plainly whether to have an implicit Faith in God, and an implicit Faith in the Church, be not in the very same manner to believe in the Church as we believe in God; or wherein lies the Difference? He ought therefore to make this Objection consistent with itself, and also with the plain Doctrine of the Roman Catechism before he can have any Right to insist upon it.

But it is urged in the Objection, that *the Scripture commands us to bear T H A T Church upon Pain of an Anathema. That Church! What Church, I pray, is it which the Scripture thus commands us to bear? And in what Case does it so command us? The Place referred to is Matt. xviii. v. 15,*
16, 17.

16, 17. The Words are these; *If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his Fault between thee and him alone: If he shall hear thee, thou hast gain'd thy Brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the Mouth of two or three Witnesses every Word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: But if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen Man and a Publican.*

Now here I desire you to observe, that our Blessed Saviour, whose Words these are, does not in them make any Mention, or offer the least Suggestion concerning Doctrines of Faith, or Errors in Religion; but only speaks of such private Injuries, Wrongs, or Offences, as one Man may be supposed to do or give to another. *If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, &c.* These are the only Things which, in this Place, he directs to be referred to the Judgment of the Church, in Case that the Person who has done the Wrong

Wrong or given the Offence refuses, upon private Admonition, to make Satisfaction.

Observe also that *Ecclesia* (which originally is a *Greek* Word, and in the Place now under Consideration is rendered *the Church*) properly signifies nothing else but an *Assembly*, of what Sort soever it may be. Thus, in the 19th Chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles*, the tumultuous Meeting of the People of *Ephesus* in the Theatre, v. 29. is, in the *vulgar Latin*, conformable to the *Greek*, called *Ecclesia*. *Erat enim Ecclesia confusa* : For the Assembly was confused, v. 32. And *dimisit Ecclesiam* : He dismissed the Assembly, v. 41. Thus also, in the same Chapter, the supreme Court of Judicature within that City is called *Ecclesia*. *In legitima Ecclesia poterit absolvi* : It shall be determined in a lawful Assembly, v. 39. If then we literally and exactly translate this Expression of our Blessed Saviour's, upon which the *Romish* Divines lay so great a Stress ; thus the Words are to be render'd, --- Tell it unto the Assembly ;

sembly: But if he neglect to hear the Assembly, &c. But in other Places of the New Testament the Word Ecclesia is in a peculiar Manner used to denote an Assembly, Congregation, or Company of Men professing the Christian Faith, to whom, in the English Tongue, we give the Name of a Church.

Here then I desire an express and clear Answer to a very plain and fair Question. Our Blessed Saviour says, *If thy Brother shall trespass against thee [and will not hearken to any private and friendly Admonition] tell it unto the Church [Dic Ecclesiæ.] But if he neglect to hear the Church [Si autem Ecclesiam non audierit] let him be unto thee as an Heathen Man, &c.* Now what Church, Assembly, Congregation, or Company of Men is it which is here meant by the Word *Ecclesia*? It cannot be the *Catholick Church*: Nor is it pretended that every private Christian should, in such Cases as are here spoken of, lay his Complaint before God's faithful People dispersed through the whole World;

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which is the true Notion of the *Catholick Church* that is given us by the *Roman Catechism*. The *Romish* Divines then are forced to acknowledge that by the *Church*, in this Place, no more is meant but that *particular Part of the Catholick Church* of which the Person complained of is immediately a Member, or rather *the Pastors* of such particular Church, to whose Judgment and Censure the Party is subject.

Farther then I demand, Is any *particular Church*, or, are the Pastors of such a Church *infallible*? And is it not possible that they may sometimes be mistaken in their Judgment and Determination of such Cases as our Saviour here directs to be brought before them? I mean the Cases of *one Brother's trespassing against another*, which is the only thing that, in this Place, he is speaking of? No *Romish* Divine has ever maintained such an Infallibility as this: Except, perhaps some of the *Jesuits*, who have been charged with teaching, that the Pope (especially if assisted by his Consistory of

of Cardinals) is infallible even in *Matters of Fact*. But this extravagant Doctrine is rejected by all other sober Men even of the Church of *Rome*.

If then, in this Place now under our Consideration, our Saviour does not so much as intimate any thing concerning the *Catholick Church*, or her Decrees in Matters of Faith and Religion; but speaks only of each *particular Church* or Assembly of which the Person to be complained of is supposed to be a Member; and with relation to no other Case but that of *one Brother's trespassing* [or sinning] *against another*; and if no such *particular Church* is infallible in such Cases, or indeed in any other; How can any thing *from hence* be inferred to prove the Infallibility of the *Catholick Church*, or of any Church whatever; especially in such Matters as are not here at all spoken of? Or that we *owe an implicit faith to the Decrees of the Church*, as is urged in the Objection? He who would prove the Church to be infallible, and that we are obliged to receive her Doctrines

with *an implicit Faith*, must find some other Arguments for his Opinion; for no such Thing is either said or imply'd in these Words of our Blessed Saviour.

But, it may be, you will ask, What then is the true Meaning of those Words, *If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen Man and a Publican?* It were enough for me to answer, that it already appears that they neither have nor can with any Reason be supposed to have any such Meaning as the Objection would put upon them. But, for your farther Satisfaction, I shall fully lay open the plain Meaning of the whole Passage: Whereby it will be as manifest as the Light at Noon-day, that the *Romish Doctrine of Infallibility* and *implicit Faith* can never be supported by it, or any particular Words or Expression in it.

At the time when our Blessed Saviour was upon the Earth, the *Jews*, who then (although in a State of great Corruption) were God's only visible Church, were under the Power and
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Dominion of a *Heathen Government* : And He, who knew all Things, perfectly foresaw that the *Christian Church*, which was soon to be planted, would, all of it for many Years, and some of it for many more, be exactly in the same or the like Condition. It being therefore highly necessary that all the Professors of the true Religion should maintain the greatest Peace and Amity among themselves ; especially when their Enemies would watch all Opportunities to divide, and thereby to destroy both them and the Profession of their Religion ; among many other excellent Rules which, for this and other good Purposes, he was pleased to give them, one is contained in the Words which I have above transcribed. *If (says Christ) thy Brother, a Professor of the same true Religion with thyself, shall trespass against thee ; if he does thee Wrong, or by any sinful Misbehaviour gives thee Ground of Offence ; First endeavour in the most private Manner you can to reclaim him ; Go and tell him his Fault between thee and him alone.*

If he shall hear thee, and by this thy loving Admonition become sensible of what he has done amiss, thou hast gain'd thy Brother by bringing him to Repentance. - But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, and in their Presence admonish him again; that in the Mouth of two or three Witnesses every Word may be established: And if he shall neglect to hear them; if their Admonition joined with thine will not work upon him; tell it unto the Church: Make the whole Matter known to the Assembly or Congregation with whom you both join in the Worship and Service of God, that they, in a regular Way, may also admonish him. But if, in such a Case as this, he neglect to hear the Church; if he despises their Admonitions and Censures, and will not thereby be brought to Repentance; have no more to do with him, look upon him no longer as a Brother, but let him be unto thee as an Heathen Man and a Publican.

This is most manifestly the full and plain Import of these Words of our Blessed

Blessed Saviour : And that the Practice of the Primitive Church was conformable to the Rule here laid down is most notorious. If one Christian *had a Matter against another*, he was not to go to Law before the Unjust or Unbelievers, but to lay his Case before the Saints, 1 Cor. vi. 1, &c. He who *sinned* and did not shew sufficient Signs of Repentance, was to be *re-buked before all*, or in the open Congregation, 1 Tim. v. 20. They that were *unruly* were to be *warned* ; 1 Thess. v. 14. And it was look'd upon as the Duty of every Christian, to *withdraw himself from every Brother that should walk disorderly, and not after the Tradition*, (that is to say, the Doctrines and Rules delivered by the Apostles, which they themselves had received from Christ and the Holy Spirit, and) which the several Churches *received of them*, 2 Thess. iii. 6. And again, (says St. Paul) *If any Man obey not our Word by this Epistle, note that Man, and have no Company with him*, ver. 14. Also, I have written unto you not to keep
Company,

Company, if any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such an one no not to eat; 1 Cor. v.

11. And immediately after, --- *Do not ye judge them that are within [your own Church or Congregation?]* --- *Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked Person, ver. 12, 13.*

Thus the Practice of the Primitive Church gives us a very plain Inlet into the true Meaning of those Words of our Blessed Saviour, *If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen Man and a Publican;* and shews us to what Sort of Cases they relate. But what Ground there is from hence to infer, that *we owe an implicit Faith to the Decrees of the Church* in her Determination of Doctrines (for that is it which the Objection means) I profess I am not able to find.

But it may be asked, Does not St. Paul give plain and positive Direction that *a Man that is an Heretick, after the first and second Admonition* should

should be *rejected*, and cast out of the Church ? And is not he who denies any Doctrine taught by the Church as Matter of *Faith*, to be look'd upon as an *Heretick* ? I answer, That if any Church, or all the Churches in the World, should teach any Doctrine which *never was taught by God*, a Man is not to be looked on as an *Heretick* for denying such a Doctrine. What therefore we demand, and that very reasonably, is, that the Church of *Rome* should shew that the Doctrines which they teach, and we deny, have been taught *by God* : For until they can do this, they have no Right to call us *Hereticks* for not receiving such Doctrines. Neither does *St. Paul* in the Place quoted, so much as suggest that a Man is to be called an *Heretick*, barely for denying the Truth of a Doctrine (which sometimes may arise only from some Weakness in his Understanding, which is not in his Power to help ;) as will appear by his own Words, which are these, *Tit. iii. 10, 11. A Man that is an Heretick, after the first and second Admonition, reject :*

reject : Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself. Cum sit proprio judicio condemnatus, He being condemned by His Own Judgment, as the Vulgar Latin renders it.

According to St. Paul then, a Man is not to be accounted as an *Heretick*, because he denies the Truth of a Doctrine ; except his Denial thereof be *sinful*, and he himself therein *condemned by his own Judgment*. If sufficient Reasons and Arguments are proposed to a Man to convince him that this or that particular Doctrine is taught by God, and it plainly appears that it is not Want of Conviction, but some wicked Obstinacy that makes him persist in giving Opposition to it ; such a Man may well be looked upon as a perverse Man ; and if the Doctrine which he rejects be a Fundamental of the Christian Faith, he ought to be *rejected as an Heretick* : But if the Proof that the Doctrine is from God be not very plain and clear, and the Objections which he makes to it are such as well may influence a wise and good Man ;

or

or if God does not require the Belief of it as necessary to eternal Salvation, or the Man's Error be not a direct Denial of the Doctrine itself, but only of the Explication which some Men put upon it ; and if in all this he behaves himself peaceably and modestly, and is a Man of virtuous and good Life ; I desire to know, What Authority God has given to any Church upon Earth to condemn such a Man, and cast him out as an *Heretick* ? The Apostles themselves (tho' divinely inspired) did not claim any absolute Power or *Dominion over the Faith of Christians* ; 2 Cor. i. 24. Neither did they give Commission to the Pastors of the Church to be *Lords over God's Heritage* ; 1 Pet. v. 3. But what more absolute *Dominion*, or great *Lordship* can possibly be exercised over the Faith and Consciences of Men, than to require them *Implicitly* to believe whatever Doctrines shall be determined or defined by other Men like themselves, without any Inquiry to be made into the Truth of them, or the original Ground upon which they are founded.

But

But is every private Man allowed to judge of the Truth of these Doctrines which the Church has determined, and requires to be believed? What Power the Church has to determine any such Doctrines, farther than God himself in his holy Word has determined them, I do not now enquire: But be this as it will, either a private Man must *judge with his own Judgment*, that a Doctrine is true, (however for private Ends he may endeavour to trifle that Judgment) or else it is impossible that he should be *condemned by his own Judgment* for not believing it; which St. Paul has told us he must be, or else that he cannot be *rejected as an Heretick*. And that our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles do appeal to the particular Judgment of every Man is beyond Dispute. *Yea and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right? Luke xii. 57. Judge not according to the Appearance, but judge righteous Judgment, John vii. 24. Prove all Things; hold fast that which is good; 1 Theff. v. 21. I speak as to wise Men, judge ye what I say,*
 1 Cor.

1 Cor. x. 15. *Believe not every Spirit; but try the Spirits, whether they are of God,* 1 John iv. 1. *Be ready always to give an Answer to every Man that asketh you a Reason of the Hope that is in you,* 1 Pet. iii. 15. Which plainly supposes that every Christian ought to have such *Reason* for his Religion, (upon which he grounds his *Hope*) as is fit to satisfy any other Man who asks him about it.

It is impossible for a Man to *believe* a Doctrine, except he gives his *Assent* to the Truth of it. It is impossible for him thus to give his *Assent*, except he *judges* the Doctrine to be true. And it is impossible for him thus to *judge* except he does it with *his own Judgment*.

If an *Angel* from *Heaven* should teach any Doctrine that is contrary to the *Gospel*, St. *Paul* gives me to understand that I am not to believe him, *Gal. i. 8*. But how can I judge whether a Doctrine be contrary to the *Gospel* or not, if I do not make use of *my own Judgment* to find out what the *Gospel* is, and what Doctrines it contains?

But supposing that God has determined

ned a Doctrine, and requires the Belief of it ; may any private Man take upon him to *judge* of the Truth of such a Doctrine ? Yes most certainly. For if he does not judge that the Doctrine is true, it is absolutely impossible for him to *believe* it, or give his *Assent* to it ; as I have just now said. But then there neither is nor can be a stronger Reason for a Man to *judge* that a Doctrine is true, then when it appears to him that God, whose Knowledge is infinite, and *who cannot lye*, (*Tit. i. 2.*) has so determined it. But whether God has in Reality so determined such a Doctrine or not, the Man must make use of his *own Judgment* to find out. For if he does not *judge with his own Judgment* that there is such a Divine Determination of the Doctrine, he cannot be *condemned by his own Judgment* for not believing it ; as I have already said : Neither is it possible for him to believe or give his Assent to any thing but what *he judges to be true*.

The *Romish* Divines tell me, that when a *lawful Pope*, in Conjunction with a *lawful General Council*, has determined

terminated a Doctrine, I am bound to be-
 lieve that Doctrine : But how am I to
 be convinced, either that God has given
 such Authority to *the Pope and a Ge-
 neral Council* ? or, that such or such a
 Man is a *lawful Pope* ? (especially con-
 sidering, that sometimes there have
 been Persons more than one who at the
 same time have laid Claim to the *Pope-
 dom*) or, that such an Assembly is a *law-
 ful General Council* ? (especially con-
 sidering, that some *General Councils* are
 wholly, and some partly rejected); or,
 that *the Pope and General Council* have
 made such a particular Determination ?
 (especially considering, that even the
Romish Divines themselves have differ'd
 in the Interpretation of some of the De-
 crees of their Councils) : How (I say)
 am I to be convinced of these most ma-
 terial and important Points ; except it
 be by making use of my *own Judgment*,
 Reason, and Understanding, as well as I
 can, to inquire into them ? If I am told,
 that in these Points I am to receive my
 Instruction from the *lawful Pastors of
 the Church* ; the like Questions return.
 How am I to be convinced that, in all

these Matters, God requires me to be guided by the Instruction of these *lawful Pastors*, rather than by my own Understanding? How shall I be assured who these *lawful Pastors* are? Are they the *Greeks, Armenians, Nestorians, Romanists, Jesuits, Jansenists*, or *Protestant Clergy*? And lastly, How shall I be assured, that all the *lawful Pastors* (in Case I find them out) will give me the same Instructions? or if, in some very material Things, the *French and Italians*, the *Jesuits* and the *Jansenists*, &c, differ one from the other, which of their Instructions does God require that I should follow? Nothing is more plain, than that every honest Man's Religion is and must of Necessity be grounded upon his *own Judgment*: One Man makes Choice of that Church which he *judges* to be the true one; and from this Church would learn the true Religion. Another endeavours to find out the true Religion, and thereby to come to the Knowledge of the true Church: And each of them, if they are sincere, most certainly chuses that Way and Method which in *his own Judgment*

Judgment he takes to be right. But since the Profession of the true Religion is the only sure and certain Token of the true Church; I see not how it is possible for any Man to *judge* which is the true Church, except he first *judges* which is the true Religion.

If a *Roman* Divine were now endeavouring to convert an Unbeliever, and to bring him into *Christ's* Church: Would it not be most reasonable that the Unbeliever should desire to be informed what those particular Doctrines are, which *Christianity* prescribes to be believed and professed in order to Salvation; what the true Meaning of each such Doctrine is, and how the Truth and Necessity of believing and professing it is to be proved? And if the Divine should tell him that he ought not to enquire into these Things; but that he ought to believe, and profess the Belief of each Doctrine as the Church has determined it, and this with an *implicit Faith*, as the Objection expresses it: Would it not farther be reasonable for the Unbeliever to demand, Who those Persons are of which this Church

is composed? What are the particular Doctrines which they have determined? How it appears that they have so determined them? What is the true and full Import of each of these Determinations? And who gave them Authority so to impose their Determinations upon him? Or would it be even possible for a rational Heathen, Jew, or Deist, *sincerely* to embrace the Christian Religion, *as it is taught in the Church of Rome*, until these several Questions should be so clearly and distinctly answered, as might give him full Satisfaction *in his own private Judgment*? And what other Rule could such a Man have, except his own Reason and Understanding, whereby to judge of such Answers as, upon this Occasion, should be given him? Or why should not every Man, who is baptized and bred up in the Christian Church, have as sure and solid a Foundation for his Faith and Religion (upon which he builds his Hope of Salvation) as one who was to be converted from Infidelity?

But can the illiterate and ignorant Part
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of Mankind, (which always have been much the greater Number) be any way qualified to *judge* of the mysterious Doctrines of Christianity? Such as are that of the Blessed Trinity, the Incarnation of *Christ*, &c. I answer, That as far as they are qualified to *believe* such Doctrines they must of necessity be qualified to *judge* of them; it being manifestly impossible for any Man to *believe* or give his *Assent* to a Doctrine, except he *judges* it to be true. The most learned Men have but very weak and imperfect Notions of the Christian Mysteries: *We know in part, and we prophesie in part. We see through a glass darkly* [in ænigmate, in a Riddle; as the Vulgar Latin, and the Margin of our Translation render it from the *Greek*] 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12. But as far as God has thought fit to reveal them, so far and no farther can we be obliged to believe them; because what God reveals is most certainly true, nor have we any Knowledge of these Things beside what comes from his Revelation of them. All the Revelation which we can find, that God has made of such Mat-
ters,

ters, is contained in the Holy Scriptures; and that the Holy Scriptures are of Divine Authority, is proved by such Arguments as a Man of a mean Capacity is very capable of apprehending. Whatever Doctrine therefore an unlearned or learned Man finds to be contained in the Holy Scriptures, altho' it may be beyond his Capacity to form a clear Notion of it, yet he has sufficient Ground to *judge* it to be true, because God has declared it; and thus far, and for this Reason, he is obliged to give his Assent to it and believe it. And although, for the sake of Peace, he ought to acquiesce in those Expressions which are agreeable to the Scriptures, though not contained in them, and have for a long time been made use of in the Christian Church to denote her Sense of the Mysteries of Religion (remembering the solemn *Charge* which St. Paul gives us, *that we strive not about Words*, 2 Tim. ii. 14.) yet he is no way bound to extend the Meaning of such Expressions beyond what is mention'd in the Scriptures themselves. For, as such Mysteries can only be revealed by God, so

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our Belief of them can be built upon no other Foundation but the Word of God, and not upon the Words of any Man or Men whatever ; except we are sure that such Words, though utter'd by Man, were dictated or inspired by God.

I think I have said enough to convince you, that we do not *owe implicit Faith to the Decrees of the Church* ; particularly not in Matters of *Doctrine*, (which is what the Objection would insinuate, and the *Romish* Divines pretend that we are obliged to) nor is this any Part of the Meaning of our Blessed Saviour, when he directs us to *hear the Church*. Read the whole Passage over again, and you may plainly see that by *the Church*, there, is meant not the universal or *Catholick Church* ; not *the Pope and a General Council* ; but only the *particular Church*, Congregation, or Assembly, of which the Men, who are supposed to have some Contention between them, happen to be Members : Nor is any thing there spoken, or so much as intimated, about Matter of *Doctrine*, but only of *Discipline*, in which the most learned of the *Romish* Divines

Divines do not maintain the Church's *Infallibility*. In Matters of *Discipline*, or *Practice*, a Man may be obliged to submit even to an unjust Decree, rather than disturb the Peace of the Church; provided that nothing sinful or unlawful is required from him. But in Matters of *Faith* and *Doctrine* it is impossible for him to believe or give his Assent to any thing as true, because the Church has so determined it; if he has better Reasons and stronger Arguments to convince him that it is false.

For the better strengthening of this same Objection, you tell me, some Words of St. *Augustine* are urged and insisted upon. But if the Doctrine of *implicit Faith to the Decrees of the Church*, cannot be supported by the Authority of our Blessed Saviour, who is the Founder of the Church, and *the Author and Finisher of our Faith*, (Heb. xii. 2.) nor by that of the Apostles, who *declared all the Counsel of God*, (Acts xx. 27.) Will any sober Man venture his Faith and Salvation upon the Opinion of St. *Augustine*, who lived not until about Four hundred Years af-

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ter *Christ* ; or upon that of any other Man, who, though a learned and pious Man, was not inspired by God in all that he said or writ ? But let us hear these Words of St. *Augustine*, which are so strenuously insisted upon by several of the *Romish* Writers, I should not (says he) believe the Gospel of God, if I were not thereunto moved by the Authority of the *Catholick Church* : And really I say the very same thing. I believe the Gospel to be of Divine Authority, not only because it contains all the moral Law of God, which is made known to us by our own natural Reason, but chiefly because *Jesus Christ* and his Apostles, who taught it to the World, wrought many Miracles for the Confirmation of it ; and many Prophecies were exactly fulfilled in the Person of *Jesus Christ*. If it be demanded, How am I assured what particular Doctrines and Rules of Life the Gospel contains, and what Evidence I have that these Miracles were wrought, and these Prophecies thus fulfilled ; I answer, that a faithful Relation of all these Matters is contained in the Holy Scriptures,

Scriptures, partly of the *Old*, and more
 fully in those of the *New Testament*.
 And if I am farther asked, What Assu-
 rance I have that all these Matters are
*faithfully related in the Holy Scrip-
 tures*; my Answer is, that the *Jewish*
Church, unto whom were committed the
Oracles of God, (Rom. iii. 2.) most
 carefully preserved *the Scriptures of*
the Old Testament : That these *Scrip-
 tures* were received and owned, as the
 Word of God, by *Jesus Christ* and his
 Apostles : That *the Scriptures of the*
New Testament were written by some
 of those very Persons whom *Christ* sent
 to *preach the Gospel*, (Mark xvi. 15.)
 and to confirm the same by Miracles,
 (v. 17.) That the Holy Scriptures both
 of the *Old* and *New Testament* were
 faithfully translated into all, or almost
 all Languages, and Multitudes of Co-
 pies thereof dispersed through every
 Part of the Christian Church, and are to
 this Day carefully preserved in every
 Place where Christianity is profess'd.
 It is therefore upon the *Authority* of
 this *universal Testimony*, which is given
 to the *Holy Scriptures* by the whole *Catholick*

tholick Church of all Ages and Places, throughout the World, that I believe them to be now the same as they were in the Days of the Apostles; and that they contain a faithful Account of the *Gospel* of Christ, and of the Prophecies and Miracles by which the Truth of it is abundantly confirmed and established. In a Word; the universal Testimony, not of the Church of *Rome* alone, but, of all the Christians that ever were or are upon the Face of the Earth, is a sufficient *Authority* for my believing the *Historical* Part of the Holy Scriptures to be true; and whosoever is fully convinced of the Truth of the *Scripture History*, must, I think, readily acknowledge that all the *Doctrine*, which is confirmed by the Facts therein recorded, is most certainly from God.

Thus then we may plainly see what is the true and rational Meaning of these celebrated Words of St. *Augustine*, and in what Sense it is to be understood, that his *Belief of the Gospel* was (as I think every Man's must be) grounded upon the *Authority*, or authentick Testimony of the *Catholick Church*. But

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if any Man should tell me, (as the Objector seems to think) that it was St. *Augustine's* Opinion that *we owe an implicit Faith to the Decrees of the Church*, and that God allows us no Liberty to examine the Truth of such Decrees, by the Rules of Reason and Holy Scriptures, before we receive them; my Answer would be, that nothing like it has ever yet appear'd to me in the Works of that Father, or any other that lived before, or in a very long Time after him; and that if he had said so in the most plain and positive Terms, his Authority, without that of God, would not be sufficient to make me venture my eternal Salvation upon such an Opinion.

The Objection concludes with these Words, *That as the Church by her sole Authority, could make so notable a Change as the Sabbath, allow'd of by all Christendom; though expressly contradictory to the Commandments which the Scripture enjoins, and which our Saviour confirm'd by his Directions to the young Man in the Gospel to keep the Commandments* [See *Matth. xix. 16, 17.*]

16, 17.] *that is the worst of Infidelity to doubt of the same Authority in Matters of less Moment.* If he had only called it *Heresy*, I am so well acquainted with the Language of the *Romish* Divines, as not much to have regarded it; and I have already given you the true Notion of an *Heretick*, from the Words of *St. Paul*. But to bring the Charge of *Infidelity*, and the *worst of Infidelity*, against a Man (he does not say for *denying*, but only) for *doubting of the Authority of the Church*, is such Uncharitableness as the Objector cannot justify even upon his own Principles. For if a Man believes and professes all that the Church (and even the Church of *Rome*) requires to be believed and professed in order to his Admission into her Communion by the Holy Sacrament of Baptism (as by what I have quoted out of the *Roman Ritual*, in my *Address*, § 4, 5, 6. it is manifest every sincere *Protestant* does), will any good Christian look upon him as an *Infidel*; because he *doubts of* (or even denies) *the Authority which the Church of Rome* (under a false Pretence of be-

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ing *the Universal or Catholick Church*) lays Claim to, of determining the Meaning and Truth of Doctrines, and imposing them upon all Christians to be received and be believed, under the Penalty of eternal Damnation ?

But since he lays so very great a Stress upon this last Part of his Objection, I suppose that both you and he will expect that I should give a very clear and distinct Answer to it : Which I think may very easily be done, upon the common Principles in which all Christians, that I know of, do agree.

Of the Commandment, which God gave to the People of *Israel* for the Observation of the *Sabbath-day*, some Part is *Moral*; that is to say, good in it self, and necessarily grounded upon the Nature and Reason of Things; and consequently of perpetual and unalterable Obligation. Thus it is, and always must be the Duty of every Man, who is a rational Creature, to set apart some proper Proportion of the Time which God has given him; not only to offer up his *private* Devotions to his supreme Lord and Creator, but also

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to honour and worship him *publickly*, in Conjunction with others, whom he finds disposed after this Manner to adore and serve him. Nor is any *Change* or Alteration made or pretended to be made in this [*moral*] Part of the Commandment, by the Christian Church or Religion. And that some Part of this same Commandment is [*not moral*] but only of *positive Institution*, that is to say, good, not by any necessary, unalterable or natural Goodness, but only because God has been pleased so to enact and order, is fully granted by all Christians; and not, that I can find, denied even by the *Jews* themselves.

Now although it be altogether inconsistent with the *Holiness* of God, that he should vacate or repeal any of his *moral* Laws or Commandments; yet that he may, without the Violation of any of his Attributes, annul or cancel any Law or Commandment, even of his own, which is only of *positive Institution* is universally allowed and maintained by all Christians, and is in itself beyond Contradiction reasonable.

As long as any Law of God, which commands or requires a thing of *positive Institution*; as long (I say) as any such Law of God remains in Force; so long the thing, by it commanded or required, is to be looked upon as a Duty, and accordingly to be perform'd: Nor can any Law of God be repealed by any Authority but his own. But when one such a Law is repealed or made void by God's own Authority; then and from thenceforth the thing, which formerly was commanded by it, ceases to be a Duty, and is left at Liberty to be done or not done; except when God is pleased to go farther, and even to forbid a *positive Institution* which formerly he had commanded.

Whether it be a thing *moral*, or only of *positive Institution*, that *one Day in seven* (rather than *eight* or *nine*) should be set apart for the Service of God, I have no Occasion to enquire: For this particular Part of the Commandment, which enjoined the Observation of the *Sabbath-day*, has receiv'd no Alteration by the Christian Law. But whether this *one Day* should be the *first*

first or *last*, or what other Day of the *seven*, was a thing perfectly arbitrary, and in the Power of God to determine as he should please; and therefore the enjoyning of the *seventh*, rather than any other of that Number of Days, to be kept as the *Sabbath*, was most evidently a thing only of *positive Institution*.

The Reason why the *Ten Commandments* are obligatory to *Christians*, is not because they were given to the People of *Israel* (for God gave many Laws to *that People*, which were never intended to lay an Obligation upon other Nations) but partly because every one of these Commandments, except some Part of one of them, is *moral*, and perpetually and unalterably binding even by the Law of natural Reason; and, again more fully, because they are all ratified and confirmed by *Jesus Christ* our Law giver (as the Objection sets forth) and thereby made the Law of his Church.

Our Blessed Saviour's Ratification and Confirmation of the *Ten Commandments* did not deprive God of the Authority

thority of repealing or altering any Part of these Commandments, or any one of them, with respect to any thing of mere *positive Institution* therein contained. For this is an Authority which always did, and ever will subsist in God, of which nothing, no not any Act even of his own, can ever be supposed to divest him.

The *moral Part* of that *Commandment* then which enjoins the Observation of the *Jewish Sabbath* is never to be repealed or altered by any Authority whatever: And as that Part of it, which contains no more but the Injunction of a *positive Institution*, yet, being ratified and confirmed by *Christ*, could not be repealed or altered by any Authority but that of God himself; so if it can be made appear, that God has either altered or repealed it, or any thing contained in it; the Obligation of what is so altered or repealed must of necessity be also so far altered or repealed as to become suitable to what God has by his own Authority thus done: I mean always only with relation to the *positive Institution*.

That

That all the *positive Institutions* contained in the *Jewish Law*, and, among them, the *Seventh-day Sabbath*, as far as it is a *positive Institution*, were by the *Gospel* utterly abolish'd and laid aside, and no Part of *that Law* to be retained but what is *purely moral*: That the *Gentile-Christians* were under no Obligation to observe the *positive Part of this same Law*; and that, under the *Gospel*, no Difference is to be made between a *Jew* and a *Gentile*; the *Wall of Partition* that formerly was between them being broken down, Eph. ii. 14. That this *Hand writing of Ordinances* (as the Apostle call it) is *blotted out, taken out of the Way, and nailed to the Cross of Christ* (Col. ii. 14.) And that all these old *positive Institutions*, such as *Meat, Drink, Holy-days, New-Moons, and Sabbath-days*, were only a *Shadow of Things to come*, and all of them to vanish when *Christ*, who is the *Body*, or *Substance*, should appear, (ver. 16, 17.) to bring *Life and Immortality to Light through the Gospel*, (2 Tim. i. 10.) And that being made free from this *Yoke*, we should not turn again to such
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weak and beggarly Elements, or desire again to be in Bondage to them, (Gal. iv. 9.) All this (I say) is so very plain, both from the whole Tenor of the New Testament, and many particular Passages in it; and so universally believed in the Christian Church of all Ages and Places, that no Man surely, who calls himself a Christian, will offer in the least to contest it.

And therefore when all that is *moral*, relating to the *Sabbath*, is fully retained, and nothing more done in that Matter, but only the appointing of *the first Day in every seven*, to be set apart for the Service of God, and holding publick Assemblies for his Worship; it is most manifest, that whoever made this *Appointment*, did not make a *Change* in any Law or *Commandment* of God which then subsisted or was in Force, (as the Objection would suggest was done) but only made a *new Law* and a *new positive Institution* where none was left in Being.

That the Ground and Reason of this *particular Appointment* was a thankful Remembrance of the Resurrection of
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our Blessed Lord (which was upon the *first Day of the Week*) is allowed by all : And the universal Practice of the Christian Church, from the very Beginning, in the constant Observation of this Day, gives very just Cause to conclude, that what the Apostles herein did, was by the Command of *Christ* himself, and consequently *by God's own Authority* ; and that the Reason of its being called *the Lord's Day* (Rev. i. 10.) was because it was a Day of *our Lord's* own Appointment. But let us for once suppose, with the Objection, that this Establishment of *the Lord's Day*, was made *by the sole Authority of the Church*, and without any special Command or Direction from God or *Christ*, (which indeed is a very hard Supposition) ; yet all that can from thence be inferred is no more than this, That the Observation of the *Lord's Day* is only a Matter of *Ecclesiastical Discipline* ; and consequently alterable by the Church's Authority, (which I take to be a most dangerous Opinion, although I own that some learned Men have espoused it). But that *the Church* (and

(and much less the Church of *Rome*, or Council of *Trent*) is infallible in Matters of *Doctrine*; or that, in such Cases, *we owe implicit Faith to her Decrees*, (which is what the Objection contends for) can never, by any Rules of Reasoning, be concluded from it.

In Return to my learned Adversary for this Objection of his, I desire you to propose the following short and plain Dilemma to him, to which I should be glad to have as fair and clear an Answer as I think I have given to the Difficulty by him proposed.

“ Either God has appointed *the Pope*
 “ to be an infallible Guide to the Chri-
 “ stian Church, or he has not. If he
 “ has so appointed *him* to be an infal-
 “ lible Guide; why does he (I mean
 “ the Pope) suffer Multitudes to con-
 “ tinue in his Communion (in *France*
 “ and elsewhere) who expressly deny
 “ his Infallibility, except it be in Con-
 “ junction with a General Council?
 “ But if God has not so appointed him
 “ for an infallible Guide; why does
 “ he suffer so many *Italians* and o-
 “ thers,

“ thers, who maintain his Infallibility,
 “ *(even without a General Council)*
 “ to live in his Church’s Communion,
 “ notwithstanding this false Doctrine
 “ which, in such an important and
 “ fundamental Point, is taught and
 “ maintained by them? Or is it not
 “ altogether as criminal and *Heretical*
 “ *to set up* a pretended infallible Guide,
 “ whom God has not appointed, as to
 “ *reject one whom he has appointed?*”

I have thus long dwelt upon this Ob-
 jection concerning the *Authority of the*
Church, because I take it to be a very
 material Part of the *fundamental Con-*
troversy between us and the *Romanists*.
 Let it once be proved, that God has
 given Authority to the *Catholic*
Church, not only to make Rules for
Discipline, but also to *decree* the Truth
 of *Doctrines*; and that he requires all
 Men, or all *Christians*, with an *impli-*
cit Faith, to receive such *Decrees*,
 without any farther Inquiry into the
Truth of the Doctrines, but only whe-
 ther the Church has so *decreed* them;
 That the *Catholic Church* is none o-
 ther

ther but that Society of Christians who are in Obedience to, and Communion with *the Pope* or Bishop of *Rome*; That a *lawful General Council* is such a sufficient Representative of this Church, as to have all the Authority which God has given to the *Catholick Church*; That every one of those Councils, by which the *Romish Doctrines* have been decreed, were *lawful General Councils*, and wanted nothing necessary to make them so: And, lastly, what is the true *Meaning* of each *Doctrine* which they have so decreed: Let all and every of these Things (I say) be so full and clearly proved and made appear, as to give Satisfaction to the Conscience of every sober and rational Inquirer; and then there will soon be an End of all farther Disputes about any of these *Doctrines*, or any other which shall hereafter in the same Manner be decreed. But if the Proof of any one of these Particulars, (and much more if the Proof of all of them) be altogether insufficient; I desire to know how any Man can safely venture his eternal Salvation upon the *Authority* of what the

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Romish Divines are pleased to call the *Catholick Church*, by receiving every *Doctrine*, as an *Article of Faith*, which that Church has *decreed* so to be; and that for no other Reason but only because she has so *decreed*?

The other Objection, which, you tell me, my learned Adversary makes, relates only to the *worshipping of the Host*; which (though a most gross Corruption) is only a single Branch of a more comprehensive Controversy which we have with the Church of *Rome*. And therefore I here desire you again to read and well consider all that I have said touching that whole Matter, in my *Address*, § 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

The Worship due to the true God, consists in the highest Veneration and Honour which a rational Creature can possibly pay to the Supreme Lord and Creator of the whole Universe: To praise him for his infinite Perfection and Goodness; To return Thanks to him for all the Blessings, both Temporal and Spiritual, that we have received from him; To offer up our Prayers to him for all that we want; To put our

whole Trust and Confidence in him; and in the most profound Manner to humble ourselves before him: All this (I say) and every other Thing that may be proper to express the greatest Love and Thankfulness to him, the greatest Fear of offending him, the greatest Trust in, and Dependance upon him, with every other Duty which we owe him, is all comprehended under *the Worship due to the true God.*

Now the Council of *Trent* having expressly decreed, That *the Worship which is due to the true God is to be given to the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist*, (Sess. 13. Cap. 5.) Before a Man can with a clear Conscience, give all this *Worship* as they have thus decreed it to be given; or before he can thus worship *the Host*, (as they usually call what they hold to be contained under the *Species of Bread* in this Holy Sacrament) he certainly ought to be well and thoroughly convinced, not only that *in this Holy Sacrament, there is truly, really and substantially the Body and Blood, together with the Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ,*
(as

(as the Church of *Rome* teaches) but also that God *requires* that *Christ* should be *thus* and *in this manner* worshipped, not only as he reigns in *Heaven*, into which he is *received until the Times of the Restitution of all Things*, (Acts iii. 21.) but also as he is thus [supposed to be] present in this Holy Sacrament under the Appearance of Bread and Wine. The learned Objector therefore ought fully and beyond Contradiction, to have proved both these Points to you, before we could have any Reason to expect that you should so much as hearken to what he had to urge out of St. *Ambrose* or St. *Augustine*, in favour of the *Worship of the Host*. For if this *Worship* cannot be supported by the *Authority of God*, no other Authority upon Earth can be sufficient for it. And here I desire you again to read and consider what upon this Occasion I have briefly said in my *Address*, § 20. But let us consider what he urges from St. *Ambrose* and St. *Augustine*.

In the 99th Psalm, (or the 98th as it is numbred in the *Vulgar Latin*) v. 5. we have these Words; *Exalt ye*

the Lord our God, and worship at his Footstool. In the Latin Translation it is rendered *Adorate scabellum pedum ejus*; that is to say, *Adore his Footstool*; upon which last Words, you tell me, St. Ambrose thus comments. *Per scabellum, Terra intelligitur, per Terram autem Caro Christi, quam hodie quoque in mysteriis adoramus, & quam Apostoli in Domino Jesu, ut supra diximus, adorarunt.* In English thus. By FOOTSTOOL the Earth is meant, and by the EARTH the Flesh of Christ, which at this Day also we ADORE in the Mysteries, and which the Apostles ADORDED in our Lord Jesus, as we have above said. Thus St. Ambrose expounds these Words of the Psalm; and St. Augustine gives the very same Exposition of them, in which he also makes use of these Words, *Nemo autem illam carnem manducat nisi prius adoraverit*: That is, Now no Man eats that Flesh (meaning the Flesh of Christ) except he first ADORES it.

Whether these pious Fathers do rightly interpret this Passage of the Psalm, I leave

I leave you and every Man to judge; But, from the Connexion of their Words; it is most plain that they plead for no other *Adoration* to be given to the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, but the very same which the *Psalmist*, in those Words of his, exhorts Men to give unto *God's Footstool*. If therefore you are persuaded that it was their Opinion that the *Footstool of God*, (whatever the *Psalmist* means by that Expression) was to be *adored or worshipped with the same Worship that is due to the true God*; you may from thence infer, that it was also their Opinion, that *the Worship due to the true God is to be given to the Holy Sacrament*, (or to the *Host*, as the Church of Rome now maintains). But if their Meaning was no more than this, that every thing that related to God, and even his *Footstool* itself, ought by us his Creatures to be respected with a Holy Reverence, (which was the very utmost they could suppose the *Psalmist* to intend by the Word *Adore*) their Opinion, in their Comment upon the Words which they thus expound, could be no more but this,

this, That the Holy Sacrament, which is God's own Ordinance, whereby we are made Partakers of the Body and Blood of *Christ*, or of the Benefits of that Sacrifice which *Christ* was pleased to make of himself for us, by giving his Body to be crucified, and his Blood to be shed; That this Holy Sacrament (I say) ought by every Christian to be look'd upon as a Divine and Sacred Institution, and accordingly to be received with the greatest Piety and Devotion.

By this you may easily see what is the utmost which you are to understand by the Word *Adore*, if you happen to meet it, in any other Part of the Writings of St. *Ambrose* or St. *Augustine*, applied to the Blessed Sacrament. For which Reason I need not trouble you with any farther Answer to that other Quotation out of St. *Augustine*, mentioned in your second Letter, where this Word [*Adore*] is in the same manner made use of.

Certainly no Authority, but that of *God Himself*, ought to direct, or can oblige us, when the Question is touching

ing the *Object* not only of Religious, but *Divine Worship*. But supposing that the Authority of the Fathers, or early Writers of the Christian Church, were sufficient for this Purpose ; yet surely, in a Matter of such great Importance, their Words ought to be very plain and explicit, so as to leave no Manner of Doubt about their Meaning; or else (at this Distance of Time especially) they cannot give any Sort of Satisfaction to the Conscience of him that relies upon them. If therefore our learned Adversary shall press you with any more Quotations of the like Nature with these which you have mentioned in your Letters; first desire him to prove his Point clearly by the *Holy Scriptures*, which are the only *Authentic Record* that God has been pleased to leave us of his Will, over and above that which every Man carries about him in his own Reason and Conscience: And if, after this, you have a Mind to hear what the Fathers say, take care you be not deceived by the Ambiguity of any Word or Expression. Some Words have a great *Latitude*, and some
a great

a great *Variety* in their Signification; and the most usual Sense of a Word in one Age sometimes differs from what it was in another. For which Reason, if good Attendance be not given to the Scope, Drift, and Design of a Writer, or if you are not well acquainted with the Way of Expression, and Circumstances of Things that perhaps were peculiar to the Time in which he lived, you may often be deceived or imposed upon touching his Meaning.

This Letter is grown very much longer than at first I thought it would have been, or perhaps is necessary in so plain a Case. But since I am upon this Subject, I cannot but desire you to ask our learned Adversary one very plain Question, which is this, If it had been the constant and universal received Practice of the Christian Church, all along from the Days of the Apostles, to give unto the *Host* or *Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist*, the same *Worship that is due to the true God*, and the same which the Church of Rome now gives unto it: What imaginable Occasion could there be for that Order

der of Pope *Honorius*, in or about the Year 1216. (of which I have taken Notice in my *Address*, §. 26) That all Priests ~~should~~ teach their People *reverently to bow* when the *Host* should be elevated or carried to the Sick? As you may find it set down in the Canon-Law, *Decret. Greg. Tit. 41. c. 10.*

I have thus given a full, and, I think, a very sufficient Answer to my Adversary's Objections. I beseech GOD to bring him into the right Way, and to enlighten all our Minds that we may discern what is true, and reject all Errors: Which is the hearty Prayer of,

Your, &c.

EDW. TUAM.

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